

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ERDA-05

ACDA-05 OMB-01 /065 W

----- 050190

R 090028Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1016

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 0880

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MNUC, PINT, NZ

SUBJ: OPPOSITION LEADER SHOWS LABOUR'S TRUE COLORS REGARDING
NPW VISITS

REF: (A) WELLINGTON 0762 (DTRQ"80247Z FEB 76) (B) 75 WELLINGTON
3351 (DTG 110345Z NOV 75) (C) 75 WELLINGTON 3310 (DTG 070417Z
NOV 75) (D) 75 WELLINGTON 2964 (DTG 070338Z OCT 75) (E) 75
WELLINGTON 2805 (DTG 232223Z SEPT 75) (F) 75 WELLINGTON 1678
(JUNE 75)

1. PRESS HEADLINES OPPOSITION LEADER ROWLING'S MARCH 7
PRONOUNCEMENT OF LABOUR PARTY'S TOTAL OPPOSITION TO NPW VISITS.
INDICATING LABOUR WANTED MUCH MORE THAN ASSURANCES REGARDING
COMPENSATION FOR POTENTIAL NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS (I.E.,
HOSMER RESOLUTION), ROWLING IS QUOTED AS EQUATING NPW'S AND
NUCLEAR-RMED SHIPS AND SAYING PRESENCE OF
LATTER IN NZ PORTS WOULD MAKE COUNTRY A TARGET AND BE
INCOMPATIBLE WITH PROMOTION OF NUCLEAR FREE ZONE IN SOUTH
PACIFIC. HE ALSO REPORTEDLY DESCRIBES SOUTH ISLAND WATERS
AS IDEAL FOR NUCLEAR SUBMARINE OPERATIONS (SIC)

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AND CONTENDS A BAN ON NPW VISITS IS NOT INCONSISTENT

WITH ANZUS ALLIANCE. TO SUPPORT THIS CONTENTION HE CITES ABSENCE OF "HEAT" FROM US OVER RELATIONSHIP OF NPW VISITS TO ANZUS.

2. AS RECENTLY AS FEBRUARY 24 ROWLING TOLD VISITING ASS'T. SEC. HABIB THAT WHILE HE INTENDED TO OPPOSE NPW VISITS HE DID NOT EXPECT TO MAKE MATTER MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUE. THIS FOLLOWED LABOUR'S BY-ELECTION CAMPAIGN CHARGE THAT GNZ MIGHT ESTABLISH NPW BASE IN MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS AND PRIM MINISTER MULDOON'S ADAMANT REJECTION OF THIS CANARD (REF A).

3. LAST JUNE ROWLING AS PRIME MINISTER HAD TOLD AMBASSADOR GNZ WAS LEAVING ITS OPTIONS OPEN FOR A DECISION ON NPW VISITS UNTIL AFTER NOVEMBER ELECTIONS (REF F). THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC STATEMENT BY ROWLING IN JULY THAT GNZ WAS EXAMINING ITS POLICY ON NPW VISITS.

4. IN SEPTEMBER ROWLING WROTE ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE IT HAD NEVER BEEN FORMALLY DECLARED GNZ POLICY THAT NPW'S SHOULD BE DENIED ACCESS TO NZ PORTS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THAT GNZ WAS REVIEWING ITS CURRENT POLICY ON THE SUBJECT. HE ALSO CITED PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES IN ENSURING THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE NOT PRESENT ABOARD SHIPS/ AIRCRAFT COMING TO NZ. (REF E).

5. IN CONTEXT VISIT OF EA/ANP DIRECTOR LAST OCTOBER EMBASSY SIGNALLED AGAINST ASSUMING THAT ROWLING'S GOVERNMENT WOULD APPROVE NPW VISITS WERE IT TO BE RE-ELECTED IN NOVEMBER (REF D).

6. ON NOVEMBER 6 ROWLING STATED GNZ OPPOSED NPW VISITS BUT HADN'T "GIVEN A DEFINITIVE ANSWER TO THE REQUEST THAT CAME MONTHS AGO" AND "WOULDN'T PUT A TIME FRAME ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ANSWER.....BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME COUNTER QUESTIONS THAT WE HAVE ASKED"(SIC). EMBASSY AT THAT POINT CONSIDERED ROWLING HAD FORECLOSED POSSIBILITY THAT LABOUR IF RE-ELECTED COULD PERMIT VISITS OF NUCLEAR-ARMED SHIPS AND HAD BARELY LEFT DOOR AJAR FOR EVENTUAL APPROVAL OF NPW VISITS (REFS C AND B).

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7. ROWLING'S MARCH 7 PRONOUNCEMENT BELIES THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STATEMENTS AND INNUENDOS HE EMITTED LAST YEAR AS PRIME MINISTER ANSILABOUR GOVERNMENT WAS KEEPING ITS OPTIONS OPEN REGARDING NPW VISITS. INCLUDED HERE WERE ROWLING'S REMARKS DURING HIS CALL AT WHITE HOUSE IN MAY 1975.

8. IT IS NOW CLEAR TO ALL THAT ROWLING NEVER INTENDED THAT

LABOUR WOULD APPROVE NPW VISITS. HIS MARCH 7 ATTACK ON
MULDOON GOVERNMENT'S UNEQUIVOCAL DECISION TO ALLOW US NPW'S
TO VISIT NZ ALSO SHOULD BE SEEN AS LABOUR'S ATTEMPT TO MAKE
POLITICAL MILEAGE WITH ONLY ISSUE OUTSIDE ECONOMIC ARENA
WHICH HAS CHANCE AT PRESENT OF EXCITING ANY INTEREST AMONG NEW
ZEALAND'S POPULACE, SINCE MULDOON GOVERNMENT IS EXHIBITING
STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION IN GRAPPLING WICH COUNTRY'S
CRITICAL ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL PROBLEMS.
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Message Attributes

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